



# FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.  
Chairman  
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 12:30 p.m. for Morning Hour and  
2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business  
(No Votes Before 6:00 p.m.)*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

**H.R. 1183—Fastener Quality Act Amendments**  
**H.R. 209—Technology Transfer Commercialization Act**  
**H.R. 1550—Fire Administration Authorization Act**  
**H.Res. \_\_\_—Honoring Slain Peace Officers**



## **Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules**

**Floor Situation:** The House will consider the following four bills under suspension of the rules as its first order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

**H.R. 1183—Fastener Quality Act Amendments** amends the Fastener Quality Act of 1990 (FQA, *P.L. 101-592*) to strengthen protections against the sale of mismarked, misrepresented, or counterfeit fasteners. Specifically, the bill imposes criminal penalties and civil remedies for intentionally misrepresenting the strength or other characteristics of a fastener. It requires that virtually all fasteners sold must be marked with the registered trademark of their manufacturers. To reduce the paperwork burdens of the FQA, the measure allows documents to be stored and transmitted in electronic format. The bill specifies that fasteners manufactured in accordance with certain quality assurance systems will be deemed in compliance with the FQA.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary funds, CBO estimates that the National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST) will spend approximately \$500,000 a year to implement H.R. 1183. The bill was introduced by Mr. Sensenbrenner *et al.* and was reported by the Science Committee by voice vote on March 25, 1999. The Commerce Committee discharged the bill on April 29, 1999.

**H.R. 209—Technology Transfer Commercialization Act** amends the 1980 Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act (*P.L. 96-480*) to revise federal guidelines on licensing federally owned inventions. It authorizes federal agencies to grant exclusive licenses on federally owned inventions and gives first preference for such licenses to small businesses. The new guidelines (1) require an applicant for a license to commit to put the invention to practical use within a reasonable time, (2) require the federal agency to retain a license for the U.S. government to use the invention throughout the world, (3) obligate licensees to report periodically on their use of inventions to ensure that the licensee complies with license terms, and (4) enable the federal agency to terminate the license, or part of the license, if the licensee violates federal antitrust laws.

The bill also:

- \* requires federal agencies to give 15 days' public notice and allow public comment before granting a license on a federally owned invention;
- \* clarifies that the rights of an inventor or co-inventors must be assigned for them to share royalties;
- \* allows a federal agency to transfer, assign, or acquire the rights of an invention when a federal employee is a co-inventor;
- \* requires Congress and the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to review policies and procedures for creating Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA) between federal laboratories and private or state and local entities. However, the bill does not authorize either Congress or NSTC to disapprove a CRADA; and
- \* clarifies that institutions of higher education may partner with federal laboratories for educational or scientific purposes.

The 105<sup>th</sup> Congress passed a similar measure (H.R. 2544, *H.Rept. 105-620*), by voice vote on July 14, 1998; however, the Senate did not act on the bill before adjournment. CBO estimates that the enactment will not have a significant impact on the federal budget. The bill affects direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures apply; however, CBO estimates that the bill's effect on direct spending is insignificant.

The measure was introduced by Mrs. Morella and Mr. Brown (CA) and was reported by the Science Committee by voice vote on March 25, 1999. The Judiciary Committee discharged the bill on May 6, 1999.

**H.R. 1550—Fire Administration Authorization Act** authorizes \$45.1 million for FY 2000 and \$47.5 million for FY 2001 for the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). This amount includes \$2.2 million in FY 2000 and \$3 million in FY 2001 for research. The bill requires USFA to develop and submit to Congress a five-year strategic plan of program activities, including a comprehensive mission statement, no later than April 30, 2000. In addition, USFA must report to Congress its research agenda within 120 days of enactment. The report must establish research priorities, outline a plan for implementing the research agenda, and describe the roles played by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of Defense, and other federal agencies. USFA must share information on the availability of and procedures

for acquiring excess federal equipment and on the procedures for establishing cooperative agreements between state and local fire and emergency services and facilities.

CBO estimates that enactment will increase discretionary spending by \$96 million over the FY 2000-2004 period. The bill was introduced by Mr. Smith (MI) and Ms. Johnson. The Science Committee reported the bill by voice vote on April 29, 1999.

**H.Res. \_\_\_\_** expresses the sense of Congress that all peace officers slain in the line of duty should be honored and recognized. It also states that the president should issue a proclamation calling on the people of the U.S. to honor and recognize slain peace officers with appropriate ceremonies and respect. On May 15, 1999—the annually celebrated Law Enforcement Memorial Day—more than 15,000 law enforcement officers are expected to gather in the Capitol with their families to honor their comrades who have been killed in the line of duty. In 1998, 158 law enforcement officers lost their lives in the line of duty, bringing the total number of slain officers to 15,000. The bill is expected to be introduced by Mr. Hefley and was not reported by a House committee.

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #13, May 7, 1999.



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